Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /054 W -------070305 061445Z /43

R 061043Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9457
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

CONFIDENTIAL MOSCOW 9646

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PGOV, UR, IT

SUBJECT: SOVIET-ITALIAN CONSULTATIONS

- 1. ITALIAN POLITICAL COUNSELOR MIGLIORINI BRIEFED US ON VISIT WHICH THE FOREIGN OFFICE POLITICAL DIRECTOR WALTER GARDINI RECENTLY MADE HERE. GARDINI'S VISIT OCCURED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ROUTINE SEMI-ANNUAL SOVIET-ITALIAN CONSULTATIONS. MOST OF HIS TALKS WERE WITH DUBININ, HEAD OF THE FIRST EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT, ALTHOUGH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KOVALEV GAVE A DINNER FOR HIM.
- 2. MIGLIORINI DESCRIBED THE TALKS AS TOTALLY ROUTINE AND "A WASTE OF TIME." THERE WAS NOTHING NEW ON CSCE OR MBFR AND THE MIDDLE EASTERN SECTION OF THE TALKS, ALTHOUGH THE MOST INTERESTING, WAS NOT MARKED BY ANY NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS. THE SOVIETS DID, HOWEVER, SUGGEST THAT ITALY SHOULD TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN SEARCH FOR A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.
- 3. ACCORDING TO MIGLIORINI, THE ONLY UNUSUAL ASPECT CONFIDENTIAL

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OF THE TALKS CAME WHEN DUBININ WENT ON AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT HIS INABILITY TO UNDERSTAND THE POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION. ACCORDING TO MIGLIORINI, DUBININ SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WERE COMPLETELY UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH THEY SEE AS AN ATTACK ON THE SOVIET UNION AND THE OTHER SOCIALIST STATES.

THE AMERICAN POSITION ON SALT IS EQUALLY UNCLEAR TO THEM, ACCORDING TO MIGLIORINI. DUBININ REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE MARCH PROPOSALS WERE AN ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE THE AMERICANS WITH A UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE AND THAT "OF COURSE" THE SOVIETS COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT. MIGLIORINI COMMENTED THAT WHILE MUCH OF DUBININ'S FORMULATIONS SEEMED ROUTINE, HE FELT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE EXPRESSING AGENUINE BEWILDERMENT AT THE COURSE OF U.S. POLICY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X

Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am

Channel Indicators: n/a

Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Concepts: VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS

Control Number: n/a

Copy: SINGLE Sent Date: 06-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am

Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am Decaption Note: Disposition Action: RELEASED

Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW

Disposition Date: 22 May 2009 Disposition Event: Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOSCOW09646
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00

Document Unique ID: 00

Drafter: n/a Enclosure: n/a Executive Order: GS

Errors: N/A **Expiration:**

Film Number: D770239-0825

Format: TEL From: MOSCOW

Handling Restrictions: n/a

Image Path: ISecure: 1

Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770788/aaaacyjt.tel

Line Count: 72 Litigation Code IDs: Litigation Codes:

Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM

Message ID: e07d3570-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc

Office: ACTION EUR

Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Reference: n/a Retention: 0

Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED Review Content Flags: Review Date: 17-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am

Review Event:

Review Exemptions: n/a **Review Media Identifier:** Review Release Date: n/a Review Release Event: n/a **Review Transfer Date:** Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a

SAS ID: 1952747 Secure: OPEN Status: NATIVE

Subject: SOVIET-ITALIAN CONSULTATIONS TAGS: PGOV, UR, IT, (GARDINI, WALTER)

To: STATE Type: TE

vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e07d3570-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc

Review Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009